

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image processing apparatus for forming a visible image on a recording medium conveyed by conveying means, by a plurality of color component  
5 image forming means corresponding to a plurality of color components including at least black respectively, having:

signal outputting means for outputting a timing signal for instructing to start a formation of a first  
10 color component image differing depending on image forming modes;

wherein when a monochromatic image is to be formed on a preceding recording medium and a color image is to be formed on a succeeding recording medium, said signal  
15 outputting means outputs said timing signal corresponding to said succeeding recording medium earlier than said timing signal corresponding to said preceding recording medium.

20 2. An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said signal outputting means outputs said timing signal when the recording medium conveyed by said conveying means has arrived at a predetermined position differing in each of said image forming modes.

25 3. An image processing apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said signal outputting means

precedently outputs said timing signal corresponding to  
said succeeding recording medium when a sum of a length  
of said preceding recording medium in a conveying  
direction thereof and a distance between said preceding  
5 recording medium and said succeeding recording medium  
is short relative to a distance from said color  
component image forming means corresponding to said  
first color when the color image is formed to said  
color component image forming means for forming the  
10 monochromatic image.

4. An image processing apparatus according to  
Claim 2, wherein said conveying means, when it  
continuously conveys a plurality of recording mediums,  
15 controls a distance between the recording mediums so as  
to be substantially constant irrespective of lengths of  
a conveyed recording mediums in the conveying direction  
thereof.

20 5. An image processing apparatus according to  
Claim 1, wherein said signal outputting means outputs a  
mode signal indicative of an image forming mode  
corresponding to said timing signal.

25 6. An image processing apparatus according to  
Claim 1, further having data outputting means for  
outputting, in synchronism with said timing signal,

image data corresponding to respective ones of said color component image forming means in a predetermined order, or image data corresponding to said black component image forming means.

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7. A controlling method for an image processing apparatus for forming a visible image on a recording medium conveyed by conveying means, by a plurality of color component image forming means corresponding to a plurality of color components including at least black respectively, having a step of outputting a timing signal for instructing the recording medium conveyed by said conveying means to start a formation of a first color component image differing on image forming modes;

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wherein when a monochromatic image is to be formed on a preceding recording medium and a color image is to be formed on a succeeding recording medium, said step outputs said timing signal corresponding to said succeeding recording medium earlier than said timing signal corresponding to said preceding recording medium.